

1845-1854
"READY TO GO"

John Gerber was born in Switzerland in 1796. His parents were well educated and of the so-called upper class. Early in his life he developed a love for the spiritual, and prepared for the ministry, which included a study of medicine and surgery. After graduation he was sent as a minister to the negro colonies in West Africa where he labored ten years for the Lutheran Church. He was forced to leave his post because of a severe attack of yellow fever, and came to the United States in 1834.

He was married four times, three of his wives died during his missionary labors. He was living in Basel, Ohio, where he married his fourth wife, Anna Marie Ackeret, about 1843. In 1852, he and his wife and his father, Johannes Gerber, were baptized into the L. D. S. Church in St. Louis, Missouri.

Dr. John lost his position as minister and, of course, the pay for preaching, also his clientele as a practicing physician because of his acceptance of Mormonism. To add to their distress their beautiful home was burned including all their earthly possessions. Their faith was put to a severe test. They sought the aid of their Church

THEY CAME IN 1854

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and were helped on their trek to Utah by the Perpetual Emigration Fund. At the time of emigrating to Utah the family consisted of grandfather, father, mother, and five children Julia, Ellen, Mary, John and Lois, the last three being the children of the third wife. Johannes Gerber, was in poor health. The journey across the plains and through the mountains was very trying owing to the elder Gerber's illness and the hardships incident to that slow, hot trek. Johannes, the grandfather's great desire, often expressed, was to live to see the Salt Lake Valley. This was granted him for as soon as the company came in sight of the Valley, he asked to be helped from his bed to which he had been confined so long, "so I can see the Land of Zion." After taking in the sights for which he had longed for the privilege of beholding, he remarked: "I am satisfied and ready to go." After arriving on Emigration Square that night he quietly "crossed the bar."

After the grandfather's burial, the family were taken south with a family going to Dixie. The father, John, trained only for the ministry, worked at any job he could find, living at Cedar City, Fillmore, and in Washington County until about 1862, when they moved to upper Provo Valley establishing their first permanent home in Utah when they filed on an eighty-acre piece of land.

Pioneer life was harsh, winters were extremely cold and food was scarce. In the late Fall of 1870, Dr. John Gerber passed away leaving his widow with 3 children. In 1873, Anna Marie began going out as a midwife, having learned from her husband to care for those needing such help. In this field she was very successful and as there was no doctor in Wasatch County at that time, she was called to every town in the county to attend all serious cases or sickness of any kind. She made no difference or inquiry as to the ability to pay but that it was her duty to give her help wherever needed. She served the sick for seven years until her health broke. She spent her remaining years living with her children until she passed away at Maeser, Utah, May 11, 1912.

—Files of D. U. P.